United Nations A/59/257

General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 August 2004

Original: English

Fifty-ninth session
Item 104 of the provisional agenda*
Programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, 1995-2004

Status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith to the members of the General Assembly the biennial report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, submitted in accordance with Assembly resolution 57/192.

* A/59/150.

04-45855 (E) 130904

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations

Summary

The previous biennial report of the Secretary-General on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations (A/57/296), indicating the activities undertaken with the resources of the Fund and showing income and expenditure as well as the pledges and payments made to the Fund, was submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. The present report updates the information contained in that report and reports on the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Board of Trustees, held in 2003 and 2004 respectively.

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Mandate of the Fund	1–3	5
II.	Administration and Board of Trustees	4–6	5
III.	Beneficiaries	7	6
IV.	Grant cycle	8–19	6
	A. Deadline for the receipt of new applications	8	6
	B. Admissibility of new applications	9	6
	C. Selection process	10–12	6
	D. Travel grants	13	6
	E. Payment of grants	14	7
	F. Monitoring	15	7
	G. Evaluation by the Board and secretariat	16–18	7
	H. Information flow	19	7
V.	Payment of contributions	20	7
VI.	Sixteenth session of the Board of Trustees	21–29	8
	A. Implementation of recommendations adopted at the fifteenth session	24–27	9
	B. Consideration of new applications for grants	28	10
	C. Recommendations for grants	29	11
VII.	Intersessional consultations concerning the new mandate of the Fund (March 2003)	30–31	12
VIII.	Seventeenth session of the Board of Trustees	32–57	13
	A. Implementation of recommendations adopted at the sixteenth session	35	14
	B. Consideration of new applications for grants	36–38	14
	C. Recommendations for grants	39–40	15
	D. Other recommendations	41–42	17
	E. Dissemination of information on the Fund	43–47	17
	F. The future direction of the Fund	48–50	17
	G. Cost plan for 2005	51–52	18
	H. Fund-raising	53–56	18
	I. Dates of the eighteenth session	57	19
IX.	Implementation of decisions concerning travel grants	58–61	19

X. Trends over the period 2003-2004 ..... 62–72 20

A. Annual increase in the number of applications received to attend the working groups 62–63 20

B. Annual allocation of travel grants 64–65 20

C. Contributions received by the Fund 66–70 22

D. Annual expenditure 71–72 23

XI. Conclusion 73–74 23

Annex

Criteria for the selection of beneficiaries 25

I. Mandate of the Fund

1. Convinced that the establishment of a voluntary trust fund would constitute a significant development for the future promotion and protection of the human rights of indigenous populations, the General Assembly, by resolution 40/131 of 13 December 1985, established the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations. The purpose of the Fund is to assist representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to participate in the deliberations of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights by providing them with financial assistance, funded by means of voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities.

2. By resolution 50/156 of 21 December 1995, the General Assembly extended the mandate of the Fund by deciding that the Fund should also be used to assist representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to participate in the deliberations of the open-ended intersessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, established by the Commission by its resolution 1995/32 of 3 March 1995 and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council by its resolution 1995/32 of 25 July 1995.

3. The General Assembly further extended the mandate of the Fund in its resolution 56/140 of 19 December 2001 by deciding that the Fund should be used to assist representatives of indigenous communities and organizations in attending, as observers, the sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

II. Administration and Board of Trustees

4. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/131, the Fund is administered by the Secretary-General in accordance with the relevant financial rules and regulations of the United Nations on general trust funds for humanitarian assistance, through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, with the advice of a Board of Trustees.

5. The Board is composed of five persons with relevant experience in issues affecting indigenous populations, who serve in their personal capacity as United Nations experts. The Board members are appointed by the Secretary-General in consultation with the current Chairperson of the Sub-Commission, for a renewable three-year term. At least one member is a representative of a widely recognized organization of indigenous populations.

6. The five members who have been appointed by the Secretary-General for a three-year term ending on 31 December 2005 are themselves indigenous representatives: Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (Chairperson, Philippines), Lars Anders Baer (Sweden), Nadir Bekirov (Ukraine), Ahmed Mahiou (Algeria) and José Carlos Morales (Costa Rica).

III. Beneficiaries

7. The criteria for the selection of beneficiaries have been established by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Secretary-General, upon the recommendation of the Board of Trustees (see annex).

IV. Grant cycle

A. Deadline for the receipt of new applications

8. Applications for travel grants to attend the 2005 sessions must be submitted by the established deadline of 1 October 2004 to allow for analysis by the secretariat of the Fund and Board. Admissible applications will be examined by the Board at its next session in 2005.

B. Admissibility of new applications

9. During the period between the receipt of the application and the next session of the Board, the secretariat of the Fund decides on the admissibility of applications on the basis of the mandate of the Fund.

C. Selection process

10. Admissible application forms are verified by the secretariat of the Fund as to their conformity with approved selection criteria, and additional information is requested from the organization if necessary. Reference organizations and specialized networks are also consulted if needed. The complete application form is then summarized and analysed by the secretariat in accordance with the selection criteria in a chart form to facilitate the work of the Board of Trustees.

11. At its annual session, the Board reviews all applications declared admissible, including the original application form, the analysis chart prepared by the secretariat and any other relevant information. The Board then makes recommendations to the Secretary-General in accordance with the guidelines of the Fund (annex).

12. After the session, the secretariat reviews all the Board's recommendations for consistency with relevant United Nations administrative and financial rules and regulations. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights approves, on behalf of the Secretary-General, the recommendations that are acceptable as well as new best practices identified during the annual session of the Board.

D. Travel grants

13. Approved travel grants include a round-trip air ticket in economy class via the most direct route from the beneficiary's home town to Geneva or New York, which each beneficiary receives in his or her local travel agency, and a daily subsistence allowance for the days of the session, which he or she receives upon arrival in Geneva or New York.

E. Payment of grants

14. The beneficiaries are requested to approve all conditions attached to the grant such as participating in all meetings of the session. Upon receipt of this confirmation, the secretariat of the Fund requests the Office of the High Commissioner to prepare their travel promptly.

F. Monitoring

15. Travel grants are closely monitored before and during the sessions of the working groups and the Permanent Forum. Beneficiaries are requested to provide a copy of any statement delivered as part of their reporting obligations and to complete a questionnaire on their participation upon return to their home countries.

G. Evaluation by the Board and secretariat

16. At its annual session the Board reviews the status of all travel grants allocated in previous years.

17. Reference organizations and specialized networks may be invited for a hearing at the session of the Board to provide additional information on a specific organization, answer any questions put by the Board, explain their activities to the Board or respond in any other way required.

18. The Chairman, or another Board member if possible, attends the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the Permanent Forum sessions in order to meet with all beneficiaries present and to assess the impact of their participation on the deliberations of the session. During the Working Group and Permanent Forum, the secretariat of the Fund also closely monitors the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Board.

H. Information flow

19. The secretariat of the Fund responds systematically to all correspondence received from organizations, first by acknowledging receipt of the application and if necessary requesting additional information to complete the application and secondly, once the decisions have been approved, by informing all applicants of the result.

V. Payment of contributions

20. In order to meet the requirements of the grant cycle and to meet new requests for funding during a current year, new voluntary contributions should be paid to the Fund by the end of December in order to be duly recorded by the United Nations Treasurer well in advance of the annual session of the Board. Contributions that cannot be recorded before the session of the Board will be used at its next annual session.

VI. Sixteenth session of the Board of Trustees

21. During the 10 meetings of its sixteenth session, held in Geneva from 31 March to 4 April 2003, the Board of Trustees examined information prepared by its secretariat concerning the financial situation of the Fund; new contributions paid and pledges made by Governments since the fifteenth session; applications for new travel grants to attend the twenty-first session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, applications for new travel grants to attend the ninth session of the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and applications to attend the second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Board also met with representatives of donor Governments during its annual meeting with donors, as well as with the secretaries of the two working groups and with Mr. Yorio Shiokawa, a Japanese individual donor. All recommendations made by the Board of Trustees were approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on behalf of the Secretary-General, on 6 May 2003.

22. The following contributions were received in time for the allocation of travel grants at the sixteenth session of the Board:

State	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date received*
Algeria	4 978	18 March 2003
Canada	9 747	30 January 2003
Cyprus	2 000	6 August 2002
Estonia	9 787	24 December 2002
Finland	33 996	24 October 2002
	33 996	20 March 2003
Greece	6 300	1 November 2002
Holy See	1 000	22 October 2002
Israel	5 000	30 December 2002
Switzerland	66 667	30 September 2002
Total	**173 471**	

23. The following pledges were made:

Country	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date pledged*
Bolivia	1 000	2-3 November 1999[a]
	5 000	7-8 November 2001[b]
Chile	1 000	5 November 2002[c]
Denmark	43 278	27 March 2003
	5 000	7 November 2001
Venezuela	5 000	5 November 2002[c]
Total	**60 278**	

[a] Pledge made at the 1999 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities in New York.
[b] Pledge made at the 2001 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities in New York.
[c] Pledge made at the 2002 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities in New York.

A. Implementation of recommendations adopted at the fifteenth session

24. The Board noted with satisfaction that all recommendations adopted at its fifteenth session in 2002 (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2002/6) had been implemented by its secretariat.

25. As a follow-up to its recommendations of its fourteenth session concerning an internal review by the Chairperson on the impact of the travel grants, the Chairperson reported her views to the Board at its sixteenth session.

26. The methodology that was used was as follows: interviews with some of the grantees of the Fund; an analysis of the reports and trends from 1995 to 2002 in relation to the applications received and approved and the contributions received from donors; participant observation during the sessions where the grantees were present. Discussions were also held between the members of the Board on their individual assessments. Discussions were likewise held with the secretariat of the Fund and some donors.

27. The Board members noted with appreciation that the Fund and the Board were used as a model for the establishment of various other funds within and outside the United Nations system, including a fund to allow beneficiaries of travel grants to attend the sessions of a working group of the Organization of American States in Washington to adopt a declaration on indigenous rights, a fund to be established under the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as another Fund to be established by the World Intellectual Property Organization.

B. Consideration of new applications for grants

28. The Board considered the following:

(a) Two hundred and thirty-three (233) admissible new applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives of indigenous organizations and communities to attend the twenty-first session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which took place in Geneva from 21 to 25 July 2003:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	76	32	44
America	71	23	48
Asia	72	23	49
Europe	14	6	8
Total	**233**	**84**	**149**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(b) Twenty-three (23) admissible new applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives of indigenous organizations and communities to attend the ninth session of the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, held in Geneva from 15 to 26 September 2003:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	4	3	1
America	4	0	4
Asia	10	3	7
Europe	5	3	2
Total	**23**	**9**	**14**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(c) During the intersessional period, the Secretariat implemented the new mandate established by the General Assembly to enable a total of 43 indigenous observers to attend the second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held in New York from 12 to 23 May 2003. A total of 206 admissible new applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives to attend the second session of the Permanent Forum were received:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	67	19	488
America	60	21	399
Asia	68	23	455
Europe	11	3	88
Total	**206**	**66**	**1 430**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

C. Recommendations for grants

29. After having examined the applications in the light of the selection criteria (see annex), the Board recommended the following:

(a) Eighty (80) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to attend the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, for a total amount of approximately US$ 144,000 (for a list of beneficiaries, see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2003/12, annex III):

Geographical area[a]	*Number of beneficiaries*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	25	12	13
America	22	8	14
Asia-Pacific	25	11	14
Europe-Arctic	8	3	5
Total	**80**	**34**	**46**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(b) Fifteen (15) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to attend the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, for a total amount of approximately US$ 41,000 (for a list of beneficiaries see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2003/12, annex IV):

Geographical area[a]	*Number of beneficiaries*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	2	2	0
America	3	0	3
Asia-Pacific	6	1	5
Europe-Arctic	4	2	2
Total	**15**	**5**	**10**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(c) Forty-three (43) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to attend the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, for a total amount of approximately US$ 300,000 (for a list of beneficiaries see the note by the secretariat of the Fund (E/C.19/2003/11, annex II)):

Geographical area[a]	*Number of beneficiaries*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	13	4	7
America	13	7	6
Asia-Pacific	11	5	8
Europe-Arctic	6	2	4
Total	**43**	**18**	**25**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

VII. Intersessional consultations concerning the new mandate of the Fund (March 2003)

30. At its fifteenth session in 2002, the Board of Trustees recommended that a special session be held, from 24 to 26 February 2003, to approve applications for travel grants to attend the second session of the Permanent Forum which was scheduled to be held in May 2003. However, as the new membership of the Board had just been approved, it was not possible to hold a special meeting to decide on that issue.

31. As a result, the Board of Trustees followed the procedure that was approved in 2001 for intersessional consultations concerning the new mandate of the Fund as decided by the General Assembly resolution 56/140 in selecting beneficiaries of travel grants to attend the second session of the Permanent Forum.

VIII. Seventeenth session of the Board of Trustees

32. During the meetings of its seventeenth session, held in Geneva from 11 to 19 March 2004, the Board of Trustees examined information prepared by its secretariat concerning the financial situation of the Fund; new contributions paid and pledges made by Governments since the sixteenth session; applications for new travel grants to attend the twenty-second session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations; and applications for new travel grants to attend the tenth session of the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and applications to attend the third session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Board also met with representatives of donor Governments during its annual meeting with donors; the Chief of the Research and Right to Development Branch of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Chief of the Office's Budget and Finance, as well as a member of the OHCHR Resource Mobilisation Unit and the Chief of the External Relations Branch. The recommendations made by the Board of Trustees were approved by the Acting United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on behalf of the Secretary-General, on 22 April 2004.

33. The following contributions were paid in time for the seventeenth session of the Board:

State, non-governmental organization and individual	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date paid*[a]
Chile	1 000	31 July 2003
Canada	11 044	16 March 2004
Denmark	42 121	22 April 2003
	48 999	11 March 2004
Estonia	11 816	30 December 2003
Greece	6 500	1 August 2003
Guatemala	10 004	14 July 2003
Holy See	1 000	4 December 2003
Israel	5 000	23 October 2003
Norway	49 168	2 May 2003
Mr. Yorio Shiokawa	146	27 March 2003
Mr. Sachiko Hotta	146	27 March 2003
Members of the Aichi International Connecting Conference for Human Rights, Japan	128	27 March 2003
Total	**187 072**	

[a] According to official receipt vouchers available at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

34. The following pledges were received in time for the fifteenth session of the Board:

State	Amount (United States dollars)	Date pledged
Bolivia	1 000	2-3 November 1999[a]
Chile	5 000	7-8 November 2001[b]
	5 000	7 November 2001
Venezuela	5 000	5 November 2002[c]
Total	**16 000**	

[a] Pledge made at the 1999 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities in New York.
[b] Pledge made at the 2001 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities in New York.
[c] Pledge made at the 2002 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities in New York.

A. Implementation of recommendations adopted at the sixteenth session

35. The Board noted with satisfaction that all recommendations adopted at its sixteenth session in 2003 (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2003/12) had been implemented by its secretariat.

B. Consideration of new applications for grants

36. The Board considered 266 new admissible applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives of indigenous organizations and communities to attend the twenty-second session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which took place in Geneva from 19 to 23 July 2004:

Geographical area[a]	Number of applicants	Female	Male
Africa	99	34	65
America	78	37	41
Asia-Pacific	79	19	60
Europe-Arctic	10	5	5
Total	**266**	**95**	**171**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

37. The Board further considered 35 new admissible applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives to attend the tenth session of the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, which took place in Geneva from 13 to 24 September 2004:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	7	2	5
America	13	4	9
Asia-Pacific	9	2	7
Europe-Arctic	6	2	4
Total	**35**	**10**	**25**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

38. In addition, the Board considered 246 new admissible applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives to attend the third session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which took place in New York from 10 to 21 May 2004:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	90	31	59
America	78	35	43
Asia-Pacific	67	14	53
Europe-Arctic	11	4	7
Total	**246**	**84**	**162**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

C. Recommendations for grants

39. After having examined the applications in the light of the selection criteria (see annex), the Board recommended the following:

(a) Forty-seven (47) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to attend the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, for a total amount of approximately US$ 154,212 (for the list of beneficiaries, see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2004/8, annex III):

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	18	9	9
America	13	5	8
Asia-Pacific	12	4	8
Europe-Arctic	4	2	2
Total	**47**	**20**	**27**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(b) Seventeen (17) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations[1] to attend the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, for a total amount of approximately US$ 71,444 (for the list of beneficiaries, see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2004/8, annex V):

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	4	1	3
America	4	0	4
Asia-Pacific	6	2	4
Europe-Arctic	3	1	2
Total	**17**	**4**	**13**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(c) Forty-six (46) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to attend the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, for a total amount of approximately US$ 249,700 (for the list of beneficiaries, see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2004/8, annex IV):

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	15	7	8
America	15	11	4
Asia-Pacific	13	5	8
Europe-Arctic	3	1	2
Total	**46**	**24**	**22**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

40. The selection of beneficiaries reflects the admissible applications received, which might not be geographically balanced, as some countries submitted many applications and others submitted only a few, or none at all.

D. Other recommendations

41. The Board emphasized that the beneficiaries of travel grants when accepting the conditions attached to the grant commit themselves to participate fully in the session of the working groups or the Permanent Forum; failure to do so would have a negative impact on future recommendations for grants.

42. The Board emphasized that beneficiaries of travel grants should report back to their communities to ensure that the community also benefits from the participation of its representative. In this respect, the Board adopted a new guideline by which each beneficiary, as part of his/her reporting obligation to the Fund, will be requested to report on the follow-up activities organized upon return as well as on his/her participation at the working groups or the Permanent Forum. A framework for reporting was elaborated and will be distributed among beneficiaries.

E. Dissemination of information on the Fund

43. During the sessions of the working groups and the Permanent Forum, the secretariat should continue to organize information meetings on the Fund for indigenous representatives.

44. The Board recommended that the members of the Board present at the next session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the secretariat should meet with indigenous members from the various regional groups to discuss ways and means of disseminating information on the Funds to communities and countries that have still not applied to the Fund and that do not have access to information on the working groups or the Permanent Forum.

45. The Board recommended that the Bureau of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at its annual session in 2004 should continue to invite the Chairperson, or any other member of the Board who could be in Geneva during the session, or the secretariat of the Board and Fund to deliver a statement introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the Fund. The Board recommended that the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration follow the same practice.

46. The Board members have agreed to actively distribute the Fund's application forms as widely as possible, in particular in regions that have been underrepresented.

47. The Board encouraged the participation of indigenous cross-border organizations as well as partnerships among indigenous communities, including from different regions.

F. The future direction of the Fund

48. The members of the Board also discussed the future direction of the Fund in the light of the information provided by the Secretariat. The members took note of

the management changes, the establishment of the Task Force on United Nations Trust Funds as a follow-up to the Secretary-General's reform agenda and the increasing focus on the evaluation of results. The Board also noted the review of the United Nations mechanisms relating to indigenous issues to be undertaken by the Economic and Social Council as well as the end of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

49. The members underlined the fundamental importance of the Fund and the Board as an independent United Nations body that provides direct assistance to indigenous peoples and allows them to participate in United Nations activities. They underlined the fact that at present all Board members are themselves indigenous representatives.

50. The Board members expressed their commitment to the Fund and requested that any proposed changes be discussed fully with them before they are implemented. In the context of these discussions, the Board members emphasized the need always to prioritize the interests of indigenous peoples.

G. Cost plan for 2005

51. The Board revised and approved the cost plan of the Fund for 2005 with envisaged expenditure amounting to US$ 777,000.

52. The Board expressed concern about the fact that there is a discrepancy between its approved cost plan and the figures that appear in the OHCHR Annual Appeal 2004. The Board expressed the hope that its cost plan for 2005 would be reflected in the annual appeal.

H. Fund-raising

53. The Board held its annual meeting with donors. Representatives of Algeria, Bolivia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Guatemala, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Norway, the Netherlands, Turkey and the African Union attended. The Board expressed its appreciation for the donors' contributions to the Fund and their pledges.

54. The Board confirmed its practice of meeting each year with donors on the last day of its session.

55. Board members recommended that the High Commissioner for Human Rights send a letter to donors in September 2004 appealing for additional contributions to be paid before its next session in order to allow it to increase further the number of grants and the representation of indigenous communities and organizations in 2005.

56. The Board recommended that the Bureau of the Commission on Human Rights at its sixty-first session in 2005 should again invite the Chairperson, or any other member of the Board who could be in Geneva during the session, to deliver a statement introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the eighteenth session of the Board and on the activities and needs of the Fund and to appeal for new contributions.

I. Dates of the eighteenth session

57. In order to allow the secretariat to be able to analyse the applications to attend the fourth session of the Permanent Forum received before the deadline of 1 October 2004, the Board decided that its eighteenth session, of five days, should be held from 21 to 25 February 2005.

IX. Implementation of decisions concerning travel grants

58. The secretariat of the Fund reports to the Board of Trustees at each annual session on the implementation of all decisions made at its previous session and approved by the Secretary-General. The Board reviews the implementation of those decisions and the secretariat reports annually on their implementation to the General Assembly, within the report of the Secretary-General on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, to the Commission on Human Rights and to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The main report to the General Assembly is the present biennial report.

59. Some beneficiaries of the Fund may not be able to attend the sessions of the working groups or the Permanent Forum for personal reasons. In such cases, upon being informed, the secretariat of the Fund requests that the grant be cancelled. The money is then available in the Fund for allocation the following year.

60. A high percentage of beneficiaries attend the sessions. For example, for the 2003 sessions, out of the 80 beneficiaries who were given travel grants to attend the twenty-first session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, a total of 65 (81 per cent) attended the session. Out of the 15 beneficiaries who were given a travel grant to attend the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration, 13 attended (86 per cent). Of the 43 beneficiaries of travel grants to attend the second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 38 attended (88 per cent) the session. The money initially allocated for the grants to beneficiaries who were unable to attend was therefore part of the balance available for the Fund in 2004.

61. The decisions on the allocation of travel grants are made on the basis of the applications received from individuals; therefore, the grants are awarded to the person who applied. If the beneficiary of a grant is not able to attend a given session, on an exceptional basis and if time permits, the secretariat may approve the replacement of the beneficiary. In such a case, the secretariat requests a duly signed letter from the beneficiary and from an executive of the organization, as well as from the person proposed to replace the beneficiary. The secretariat will also request that the proposed replacement fill out a new application form. Once all these requirements are met, the secretariat will inform the Chairperson of the Board who, during the intersessional period, takes such decisions, with the advice of the member of the Board from the relevant geographical region, if needed.

X. Trends over the period 2003-2004

A. Annual increase in the number of applications received to attend the working groups

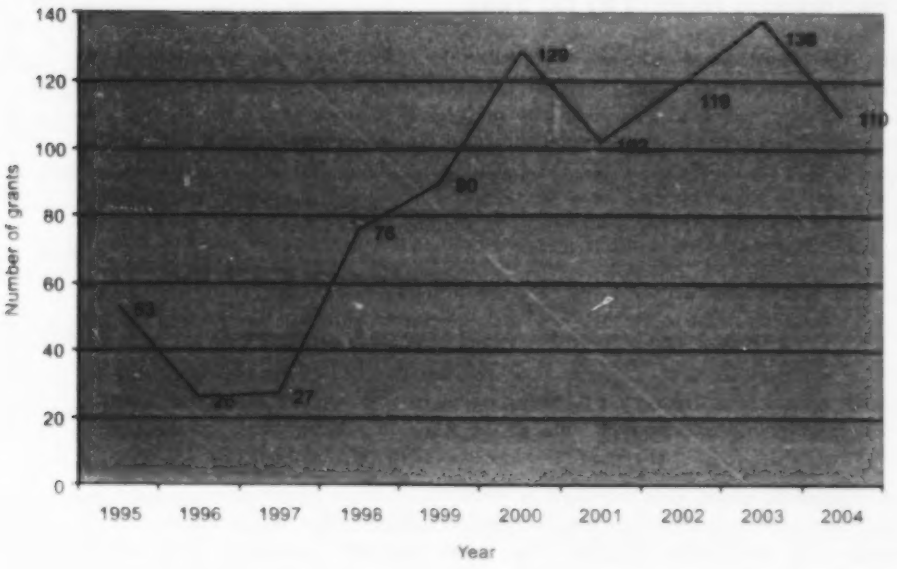
62. The Board of Trustees noted with satisfaction at its annual sessions the increase in the number of admissible applications received over the years from indigenous communities and organizations worldwide to attend the two working groups and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The table below shows a substantial increase from 1997 (52 applications) to 2004 (547 applications):

Working groups	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Working Group on Indigenous Populations	47	72	220	119	225	232	233	266
Working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people	5	3	20	36	32	27	23	35
Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues	-	-	-	-	-	323	206	246
Total	**52**	**75**	**240**	**155**	**257**	**582**	**462**	**547**

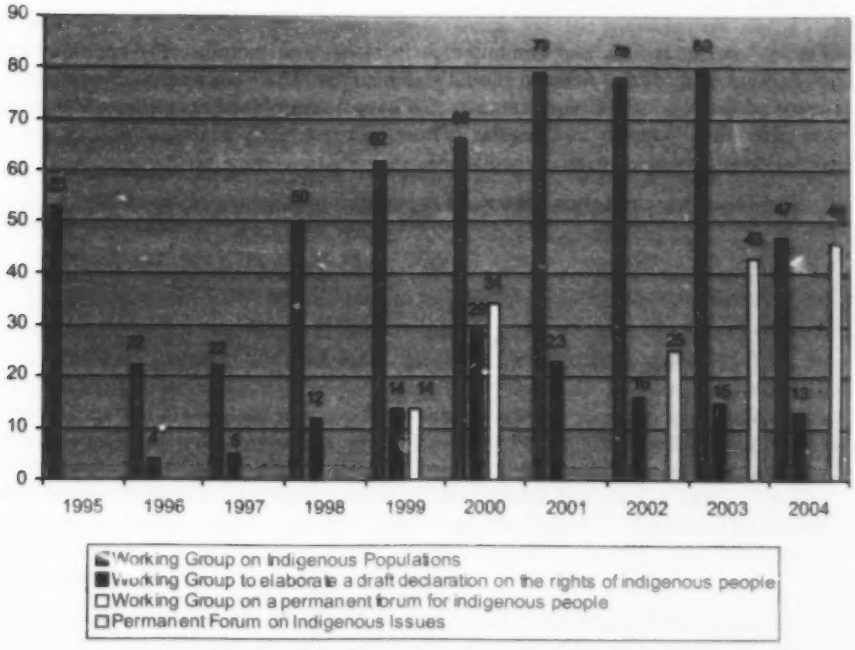
63. Every year, in addition to the admissible applications to attend the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the secretariat receives more than 100 applications that are not admissible as they are not complete, do not fall within the mandate of the Fund, or are received after the established deadline. The secretariat also receives more than 50 applications annually to attend the working group charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people that are not admissible for the same reasons, or because the organizations do not have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, or are not authorized to attend this working group by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, in accordance with the procedure established by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1995/32.

B. Annual allocation of travel grants

64. As mentioned above, the requests for travel grants from indigenous organizations and communities increases every year, and the Fund and Board must respond accordingly. In 2004 the secretariat received a total of 547 admissible applications to attend the two working groups and the Permanent Forum. With the resources available, it was able to allocate only 110 travel grants. Between 1995 and 2004 the Fund allocated grants as illustrated in the chart below:



65. The distribution of grants between 1995 and 2004, by session, is represented as follows:



C. Contributions received by the Fund

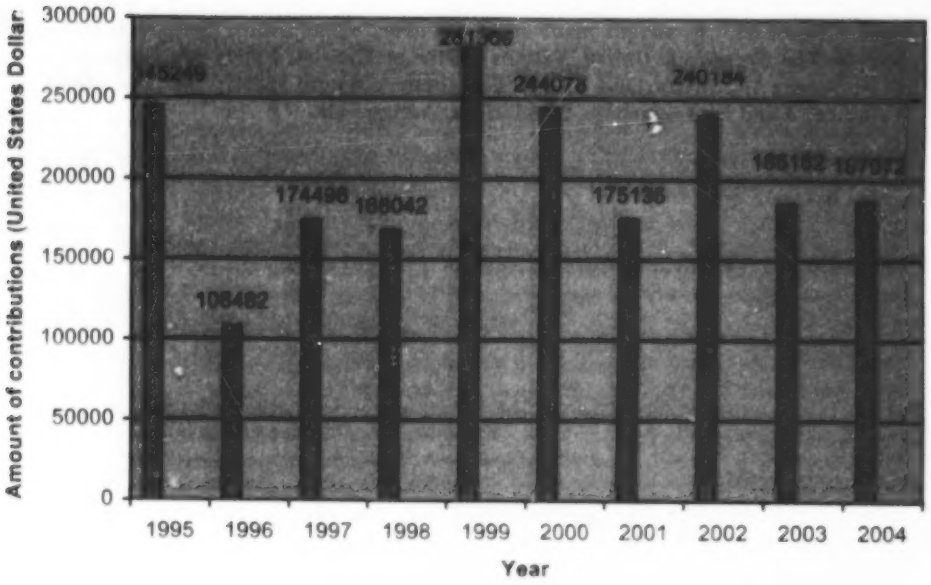
66. The Board can allocate travel grants on the basis of the contributions paid and duly registered by the United Nations Treasurer, as well as any balance remaining from previous years, as established by the United Nations Office at Geneva. The Board does not take pledges into consideration. Therefore, donors are kindly invited to pay their contributions to the Fund before the annual session of the Board, in order for the Board to be able to recommend allocating the money immediately. Contributions paid after the session will be available only for the next session of the Board.

67. In accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, on behalf of the Secretary-General, annually sends a letter to all Governments appealing for regular annual contributions to the Fund, so as to allow the Fund and the Board to fulfil their mandate effectively and to meet the increasing needs of indigenous peoples.

68. Since the creation of the Fund in 1985, its mandate has been expanded three times in response to developments and the changing realities of the United Nations system and indigenous peoples. The Board and the secretariat have reacted immediately to those new challenges so as to enable indigenous people to benefit from each new mandate, with the support of the donors to the Fund. Over the years, the General Assembly and the regular donors to the Fund have viewed the Fund as an important tool in providing assistance to indigenous people and have recognized the accomplishments of its Board of Trustees in carrying out this task.

69. When the mandate of the Fund is extended, applications received from indigenous organizations and communities increase, and therefore the amount of contributions to meet this demand should also increase. The Fund and the Board can function effectively only if Governments that have not previously contributed to the Fund offer their support and regular donors increase their contributions, as the General Assembly has repeatedly requested.

70. The following chart shows the trend in contributions from 1995 to 2004:



D. Annual expenditure

71. In accordance with its mandate, the only expenditures encumbered annually under the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations are travel grants for indigenous representatives to attend the two working groups and the Permanent Forum. A small amount of money (about US$ 30,000) is allocated every year for the organization of the session of the Board of Trustees in Geneva.

72. Additionally, in accordance with the United Nations financial rules and regulations governing the general trust funds for humanitarian assistance, 13 per cent of the envisaged expenditure is set aside to cover programme support costs and 15 per cent for the operating cash reserve.

XI. Conclusion

73. **The cost plan for 2005 foresees the need for approximately US$ 777,000 for assisting representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to participate in the deliberations of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the working group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Interested donors are invited to pay their contributions before the next session of the Board of Trustees (February 2005) in order to enable the Fund and the Board of Trustees to fulfil their mandate.**

74. **Contributions to the Fund can be made, in United States dollars and other currencies to: "United Nations Office at Geneva", account 485001802, J. P. Morgan Chase Bank, New York, NY 10004, United States of America — Swift**

code: CHASUS33; by cheque made out to the order of the United Nations, to be sent to The Treasurer, United Nations Office at Geneva, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. In all cases, donors should specify: For the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, Account IH.

Annex

Criteria for the selection of beneficiaries

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/131, the only beneficiaries of assistance from the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations shall be representatives of indigenous people's organizations and communities:

(a) Who are so considered by the Board of Trustees;

(b) Who would not, in the opinion of the Board, be able to attend the sessions of the working groups or the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues without the assistance provided by the Fund;

(c) Who would be able to contribute to a deeper knowledge on the part of the working groups or the Permanent Forum of the problems affecting indigenous populations and who would secure a broad geographical representation.

Furthermore, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/32, in order to be able to attend the working groups of the Commission on Human Rights, organizations must hold consultative status with the ECOSOC or be authorized by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

In addition, the Secretary-General approved the following criteria upon recommendation by the Board:

(a) The representatives and the organizations applying for a grant should be indigenous;

(b) The Board does not consider applicants who do not provide a letter of support signed by an executive of their indigenous organization nor an applicant who is not an indigenous person;

(c) The Board considers a maximum of two applicants per organization;

(d) Applicants are requested to submit application forms and recommendation letters in the working languages of the Board's secretariat (English, French or Spanish);

(e) The Board selects representatives who have never participated in a session of a working group or the Permanent Forum as well as those who have already participated and could develop specialized capacity and strengthen the core group of participants in a working group or the Permanent Forum;

(f) The Board encourages indigenous organizations and communities to consider gender balance and, if possible, nominate one woman and one man;

(g) The Board encourages indigenous organizations and communities to consider nominating young persons;

(h) The Board encourages the former beneficiaries of the Indigenous Fellowship Programme of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights to apply for grants to represent their indigenous organization or community at sessions of the working groups or Permanent Forum by sending duly completed application forms and meeting all the criteria for selection;

(i) Applicants are requested to indicate their responsibility in their organization or community;

(j) Applicants to the session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations are requested to refer in their statements to the specific theme of the year.

Notes

[1] The Board of Trustees initially approved 13 grants and placed 4 on a contingency list. The additional 4 beneficiaries were approved upon receipt of an anticipated contribution from a donor government.